

Henryk Mikolaj Górecki



Henryk Mikolaj Gorecki Photo © Malcolm Crowthers

An introduction to Góreckis music by Adrian Thomas

Henryk Mikolaj Górecki belongs to the generation of Polish composers (which includes his exact contemporary Penderecki) that found itself poised to take full advantage of the post-Stalin thaw of the mid-1950s. A plethora of youthful works from 1955-59 saw the composer ranging freely from the exuberant and dynamic vitality of the *Songs of Joy and Rhythm* op.7 (1956, rev.1960) through to experimental scores owing more to Webern and Boulez. Henceforth, the evolution of Góreckis musical language has been a consistent search for the most truthful expression of his musical roots.

It quickly becomes apparent that Górecki holds Polands musical past, its church and its folk culture in unwavering awe; for him they are the unchallengeable rock on which both his and his countrys identity and true heritage are securely founded. From the combusive, flamboyant energy of the orchestral *Scontri (Collisions)* op.17 (1960) to the reflective lamentations of his best-known work, the *Third Symphony* op.36 (1976) and on to his most recent chamber works such as the string quartet *Already it is Dusk* op.62 (1988) and his piece written in memoriam Michael Vyner, *Good Night* (1990), it is this deeply-felt awareness of his roots that gives his music a directness and emotional impact all its own.

In creating this particular world, Górecki calls upon a number of sources. The folk and religious elements are both abstract (immediate granitic textures, large-scale canvasses, slow tempi) and specific (folk songs and texts mainly from his beloved Tatra mountains, plus modal hymnody and references to old Polish music). In times past these were often treated beyond recognition, but in the 1970s Górecki came to confide in their innate simplicity and let them stand for themselves, as in his recent folksong settings and Marian hymns. Occasionally he will also make passing reference to phrases or harmonic progressions from composers with whom he feels a special closeness, such as Beethoven, Chopin or Szymanowski. Such allusions or quotations are an integral part of the musical flow, of the personal vision that has marked out Góreckis unique voice from that of his contemporaries and compatriots.

His restrained approach to his material should not, however, be confused with the minimal aesthetics of certain Western European or American composers. It is a quite specifically Eastern European phenomenon (one he shares in some measure with the Estonian composer Arvo Pärt) which Górecki has refined to a remarkable degree. Long regarded in his native Poland as a composer of uncommon individuality, Górecki is now beginning to be acknowledged in the West as a major figure of considerable stature whose music transcends cultural and political boundaries.

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FULL ORCHESTRA

Canticum Graduum op. 27

1969 12 min

for orchestra

4.0.4.4sax.4-8.4.4.0-strings (24.0.8.8.8)

World Premiere: 11 Dec 1969

Dusseldorf, Germany

West German Radio Symphony Orchestra

Conductor: Michael Gielen

Availability: World (excluding Poland, Albania, Bulgaria, China, Yugoslavia, Cuba, North Korea, Vietnam, Rumania, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and former Soviet Union)

Old Polish Music op. 24

1969 23 min

for brass and strings

5hn.4tpt.4trbn-strings (min.8.8.8.8.8)

9790060094316 **Study Score - Hawkes Pocket Score 1240**

World Premiere: 24 Sep 1969

Warsaw, Poland

National Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra

Conductor: Andrzej Markowski

Availability: World (excluding Poland, Albania, Bulgaria, China, Yugoslavia, Cuba, North Korea, Vietnam, Rumania, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and former Soviet Union)

Refrain op. 21

1965 17 min

for orchestra

0.4.4.4-4.4.4.0-timp(3).perc(1):tam-t-strings

Availability: USA, Canada and Mexico

FULL ORCHESTRA 2

Scontri op. 17

Collisions

1960 17 min

for orchestra

2.2picc.0.2.Ebcl.bcl.2.2dbn-4.4.3.1-perc(8)-2pft-2harps-strings

(30.0.12.12.8)

perc1:2bongos/glsp/2tam-t

perc2:v.large BD/3Chin.bl/2susp.cym

perc3:2timbales/4susp.horseshoes/2susp.cym

perc4:2tom-t/4cowbellsperc5:2tom-t/3horseshoes

perc6:2SD/vib/2susp.cym

perc7:BD/5tpl.bl/2susp.cym

perc8:2SD/marimbaphone/2gongs

Availability: USA, Canada and Mexico

Symphony No.1 '1959' op. 14

1959 20 min

for string orchestra and percussion

timp.perc(7):3SD without snares;SD;TD;3susp.cym;xyl;marimbaphone;vib-hpd-harp-strings(16.16.14.12.10)

Availability: USA, Canada and Mexico

Three Dances op. 34

1973 12 min

for orchestra

2(II=picc).2.2.2-3.4.3.1-timp(2)-strings

World Premiere: 24 Nov 1973

Rybnik, Poland

Rybnik Philharmonic Symphony

Conductor: Antoni Szafranek

Availability: World (Sync rights only)

FULL ORCHESTRA 2

CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Choros I op. 20

1964 18 min

for strings

strings (24.0.12.12.8)

World Premiere: 22 Sep 1964

Warsaw, Poland

Silesian State Philharmonic Orchestra

Conductor: Karol Stryja

Availability: USA, Canada and Mexico

Quasi una fantasia op. 78

1990/91 arr.2002 40 min

Version for large string orchestra

World premiere of version: 23 Oct 2002

Auditorio Nacional, Madrid, Spain

Polish Radio National Symphony Orchestra

Conductor: Gabriel Chmura

Three Pieces in Old Style

1963 10 min

for string orchestra

strings (min: 12.10.8.6.4)

World Premiere: 30 Apr 1964

Warsaw, Poland

Ensemble 'Con moto ma cantabile'

Availability: World (Sync rights only)

SOLO INSTRUMENT(S) AND ORCHESTRA

Concerto-Cantata

1992 22 min

for flute and orchestra

4(2=picc).4.4.4-6.4.3.1-perc cyms.BD-harp-strings(16-18.14-16.12-14.

10-12.8-10)

solo flute also plays alto flute

World Premiere: 28 Nov 1992

Concertgebouw, Amsterdam, Netherlands

Carol Wincenc, flute; Radio Philharmonic Orchestra

Conductor: Eri Klas

Harpichord Concerto op. 40

1980 9 min

for harpsichord (or piano) and string orchestra

if harpsichord solo: strings (6.6.4.4.2)

if piano solo: strings (8.8.6.6.4)

World Premiere: 02 Mar 1980

Katowice, Poland

Elzbieta Chojnacka, harpsichord; Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra

Conductor: Stanislaw Wislocki

Availability: World (Sync rights only)

Songs of Joy and Rhythm op. 7

(Piesni o Radosci i Rytmie)

1956, rev. 1959 14 min

for 2 pianos and chamber orchestra

1.picc.0.I.I-0.I.I.0-timp.perc(3);SD without snares/SD with snares/

xyl-cel-2pft-strings(6.6.6.6.0)

Availability: World (excluding Poland, Albania, Bulgaria, China, Yugoslavia, Cuba, North Korea, Vietnam, Rumania, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and former Soviet Union)

VOICE(S) AND ORCHESTRA

Symphony No.3 'Symphony of Sorrowful Songs' op. 36

Symfonia piesni zalosnych

1976

54 min

for soprano solo and large orchestra

Text: Old Polish religious and folk texts, trans. in French by Jerzy Lisowski and in German by Wilhelm Szewczyk (P)

4(III,IV=picc).0.4.2.2dbn-4.0.4.0-harp-pft-strings(16.16.12.12.8)

World Premiere: 04 Apr 1977

Royan, France

Stefania Woytowicz, soprano; Symphony Orchestra of South German Radio
Baden-Baden

Conductor: Ernest Bour

Availability: USA, Canada and Mexico

CHORUS AND ORCHESTRA

Ad Matrem op. 29

(Do Matki)

1971

10 min

for soprano solo, mixed choir, and orchestra

Text: the composer (L)

4(III,IV=picc).4.4.4(III,IV=dbn)-4.4.4.0-timp(2).perc(2):SD/v.large
BD-harp-pft-strings

Availability: USA, Canada and Mexico

Beatus Vir op. 38

1979

35 min

Psalm for baritone solo, mixed choir, and large orchestra

Text: Psalms 142 (verses 1,6-8,10), 30 (verses 15-16), 37 (verse 23), 66 (verse 7), 33 (verse 9) (L)

4.4.4.4(III,IV=dbn)-4.4.4.4*-perc(2):glsp;t.bells-2 harps-
pft(4hands)-strings

*if four tubas are not available, the 1st and 2nd tuba parts may be
played by two (additional) trombones

World Premiere: 09 Jun 1979

Krakow, Poland

Jerzy Mechlinski; Krakow Philharmonic Orchestra & Chorus

Conductor: HM Gorecki

Availability: World (Sync rights only)

Symphony No.2 'Copernican' op. 31

1972

35 min

for soprano, baritone, mixed choir, and large orchestra

Text: Psalm 145 (v.6), psalm 135 (verses 7-9), and excerpt from Book I "De
revolutionibus orbium coelestium" by Nicolaus Copernicus (L)

4(III,IV=picc).4.4(IV=bcl).4(III,IV=dbn)-4.4.4.1-timp(3).perc(3):
BD/small SD/large tam-t;large BD/medium SD;v.large BD/large SD/
v.large tam.t-harp-pft(4hands)-strings(36.0.12.12.12)

World Premiere: 22 Jun 1973

Warsaw, Poland

Stefania Woytowicz, sop / Andrzej Hiolski, bar; National Philharmonic Symphony
Orchestra and chorus

Conductor: Andrzej Markowski

Availability: World (Sync rights only)

ENSEMBLE AND CHAMBER WITHOUT VOICE(S)

...songs are sung op. 67

String Quartet No.3

1995/2005 56 min

for string quartet

9790060117923 Study Score - Hawkes Pocket Score 1408

9790060119750 String Quartet (parts)

World Premiere: 15 Oct 2005

Father Kolbe Catholic Church, Bielsko-Biala, Poland

Kronos Quartet

Already it is Dusk op. 62

String Quartet No.1

1988 16 min

for string quartet

9790060090189 (Parts)

9790060090172 Study Score - Hawkes Pocket Score 1192

World Premiere: 21 Jan 1989

Walker Arts Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota, United States

Kronos Quartet

Aria op. 59

1987 15 min

for tuba, piano, tam-tam and bass drum

tuba-perc:(1)tam-t/BD-pft

9790060094330 Tuba, Piano, Tam-Tam, Drum

World Premiere: 30 May 1991

Ijsbreker, Amsterdam, Netherlands

The Barton Workshop

Concerto for five instruments and string quartet op. 11

1957 10 min

fl.cl-tpt-xyln.mandolin-2vln.vla.vlc

Availability: USA, Canada and Mexico

ENSEMBLE AND CHAMBER WITHOUT VOICE(S) 7

Genesis I: Elementi op. 19

1962 13 min

for string trio

vl.vla.vlc

World Premiere: 29 May 1962

Krakow, Poland

Antoni Feliks, vla/Edward Wiertelosz, vlc

Availability: USA, Canada and Mexico

Genesis II: Canti Strumentali op. 19

1962 8 min

for 15 players

picc.fl-tpt-mandolin-guitar-piano(4hands)-perc(2):5wdbl/2gongs/
BD/v.large tam-t;4bongos/2large gongs/v.large BD/tam-t-3vln.3vla

Availability: USA, Canada and Mexico

Kleines Requiem fur eine Polka op. 66

1993 25 min

for piano and 13 instruments

1.1.1.1-1.1.1.0-perc:t.bells-pft-strings(1.1.1.1.1)

9790060096112 Study Score - Hawkes Pocket Score 1272

World Premiere: 12 Jun 1993

Wang Zaal, Beurs van Berlage, Amsterdam, Netherlands

Schoenberg Ensemble

Conductor: Reinbert de Leeuw

Musiquette 2 op. 23

1967 7 min

for 4 trumpets, 4 trombones, 2 pianos and percussion

perc(5):cym/tam-t;susp.cym/large BD;susp.cym/large tam-t;susp.cym/
v.large BD:large cym/v.large tam-t
4 trumpets, 4 trombones, 2 pft

Availability: USA, Canada and Mexico

ENSEMBLE AND CHAMBER WITHOUT VOICE(S) 7

Musiquette 3 op. 25**1967** 14 min

for violas

(the work can be played by any multiple of the minimum number of three violas)

Availability: USA, Canada and Mexico

Musiquette 4 op. 28**Trombone Concerto**

Muzyczka IV

1970 9 min

for clarinet, trombone, cello and piano

trombone, clarinet, cello and piano

World Premiere: 15 Apr 1970

Vienna, Austria

Edward Borowiak, trbn/Witold Galazka, vlc/Czeslaw Palkowski, cl/Zygmunt Krauze, pft

Availability: World (excluding Poland, Albania, Bulgaria, China, Yugoslavia, Cuba, North Korea, Vietnam, Rumania, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and former Soviet Union)

Quartettino op. 5**1956** 8 min

for 2 flutes, oboe, and violin

two flutes, oboe and violin

Availability: USA, Canada and Mexico

Quasi una fantasia op. 64**String Quartet No.2****1990/91** 40 min

for string quartet

9790060094880 **Pocket or Study Score**9790060094897 **(Parts)**

World Premiere: 27 Oct 1991

Severance Hall, Cleveland, Ohio, United States

Kronos Quartet

Recitatives and Ariosos 'Lerchenmusik' op. 53**1984-85** 40 min

for clarinet, cello, and piano

cl.pft.vlc

World premiere incomplete: 28 Jul 1984

Lerchenborg Festival, Denmark

Danish Trio: Jens Schou, cl/Svend Winslov, vlc/Rosalind Bevan, pft

Availability: World (Sync rights only)

ENSEMBLE AND CHAMBER WITH VOICE(S)

Genesis III: Monodramma op. 19

1963 10 min

for soprano, metal percussion, and 6 double basses

Text: the composer

perc(13):12blocks/8cyms/4gongs/12tgl/8sus.cym/4tam-t/t.bells-6db

Availability: USA, Canada and Mexico

Good Night op. 63

Dobra Noc

1990 30 min

for soprano, alto flute, piano and 3 tam-tams

Text: from Shakespeare's Hamlet (E)

soprano, alto flute, piano, 3 tam-tams molto profondo (molto basso)

9790060094354 **Soprano, Alto Flute, 3 Tam-Tams, Piano**

World premiere incomplete: 06 May 1990

Royal Opera House, London, United Kingdom

Margaret Field, soprano; London Sinfonietta

Availability: World (excluding Poland, Albania, Bulgaria, China, Yugoslavia, Cuba, North Korea, Vietnam, Rumania, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and former Soviet Union)

Monologhi op. 16

1960 17 min

for soprano and three groups of instruments

Text: Henryk Mikolaj Gorecki (P)

I: 2 harps-perc:glsp.vib.marimbaphone

II: perc(3):6sus.cym

III:perc(2):3tam-t.3gongs

Availability: USA, Canada and Mexico

PIANO(S)

Intermezzo

1990

2 min 30 sec

Piano piece

World Premiere: 03 Aug 1990

Lerchenborg Festival, Denmark(7:30), Denmark
Rosalind Bevan, pft

Piano Sonata No.1 op. 6

1956/84/90

12 min

for piano

9790060111273 Piano (Facsimile)

9790060112454 Piano

World premiere complete: 17 Mar 1991

Helsinki, Finland

Paul Crossley, piano;

INSTRUMENTAL

Dla Jasiunia op. 79

For Jasiunia

2003

3 min 55 sec

Three little pieces for violin and piano

9790060119644 **Violin, Piano**

For You, Anne-Lill op. 58

1986-90

12 min

for flute and piano

flute and piano

9790060094347 **Flute, Piano**

World Premiere: 04 Aug 1990

Lerchenborg Festival, Denmark (1pm), Denmark

Anne-Lill Ree, fl Ellen Refstrup, pft

Little Fantasia op. 73

(Kleine Phantasie)

1997

13 min

for violin and piano

9790060108174 **Violin, Piano**

World Premiere: 12 Oct 1997

Hochschule/Musik&Theater, Hannover, Germany

Felicitas Hofmeister, Violin Rohan de Silva, piano

Three Little Pieces op. 37

1977

3 min

for violin and piano

violin and piano

World Premiere: 05 Jan 1978

Katowice, Poland

Mikolaj Gorecki and Jadwiga Gorecka

Availability: World (excluding Poland, Albania, Bulgaria, China, Yugoslavia, Cuba, North Korea, Vietnam, Rumania, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and former Soviet Union)

Valentine Piece op. 70

1996

4 min 30 sec

for flute solo and little bell

9790051591688 **Flute**

World Premiere: 14 Feb 1996

Merkin Concert Hall, New York, New York, United States

Carol Wincenc, fl

VOCAL

Blessed Raspberry Songs op. 43

(Błogosławione Piosenki Malinowe)

1980

20 min

for voice and piano

Text: Cyprian Kamil Norwid

Three Fragments op. 69

1995-96

10 min

for voice and piano

Text: Stanisław Wyspiański (P)

World Premiere: 23 Feb 1996

Zakopane, Poland, Poland

Wanda Warska (voice)

Henryk Mikołaj Gorecki (piano)

CHORAL

Amen op. 35

1975 8 min

for unaccompanied mixed choir

Text: in Latin

Availability: USA, Canada and Mexico

Broad Waters op. 39

Szeroka Woda
1979 16 min

Five folksongs for unaccompanied mixed choir

Text: Traditional (P)

mixed chorus

9790060096884 **SATB**

Come, Holy Spirit op. 61

Przybadz, Duchu Swiety
1988 12 min 30 sec

for mixed voices (SATB) a cappella

Text: Based on the sequence Veni Sancte Spiritus (P)

9790060119965 **Mixed Choir (Choral Score)**

World Premiere: 11 Oct 1993

Warsaw, Poland

Catholic Theological Academy Choir, Warsaw

Conductor: Kazimierz Szymonik

Epitafium op. 12

1958 5 min

for mixed choir and instruments

Text: Julian Tuwim (P)

picc-Dtpt-perc(5):SD without snare;SD;small susp.cym;medium susp.cym/
large susp.cym-vla

Availability: USA, Canada and Mexico

Euntes Ibant et Flebant op. 32

1972 9 min

for unaccompanied mixed choir

Text: Psalm 125 (verse 6) and Psalm 94 (verse 6) (L)

World Premiere: 31 Aug 1975

Wroclaw, Poland

National Philharmonic Choir of Warsaw

Conductor: Andrzej Markowski

Availability: USA, Canada and Mexico

Five Kurpian Songs op. 75

Piec Piesni Kurpiowskich
1999 24 min

for mixed voices (SATB) a cappella

Text: Polish folk songs (P)

9790060119972 **Mixed Voices**

World Premiere: 30 Mar 2003

Polish Radio Concert Hall, Warsaw, Poland

Polish Radio Choir

Conductor: Wlodzimierz Siedlik

Five Marian Songs op. 54

Piesni Maryjne
1985 28 min

for mixed voices (SATB) a cappella

Text: Jan Siedlecki (P)

9790060119989 **Mixed Choir (Choral Score)**

World Premiere: 13 Nov 2005

Krakow, Poland

Polish Radio Choir

Lobgesang op. 76

(Hymn of Praise)

2000

9 min

for a cappella choir with glockenspiel

Text: the composer, after the Psalms (G)

chorus(SATB)-glsp

9790060113574 **(Choral Score)**

World Premiere: 13 Aug 2000

St Johanneskirche, Mainz, Germany

Figuralchor Mainz

Conductor: Stefan Weiler

Miserere op. 44

1981

37 min

for unaccompanied mixed chorus

Text: (L)

9790060098703 **SSAA, TTBB**

World Premiere: 10 Sep 1987

Wloclawek, Poland

Krakow Philharmonic Chorus, members of Bydgoszcz 'Arion' Choir

Availability: World (Sync rights only)

My Vistula, grey Vistula op. 46

Wislo moja, Wislo szara

1981

4 min

folksong for unaccompanied mixed choir

Text: Traditional (P)

Unaccompanied chorus

9790060096891 **SATB**

Na Aniol Panski op. 57

The Angelus bells are tolling

1986

12 min

for chorus a cappella

Text: Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer (P)

S.A.T.B

World Premiere: 05 May 2007

Bazylika Jasnogórska, Czestochowie, Poland

Chór Polskiego Radia

Conductor: Wlodzimierz Siedlik

Salve, sidus Polonorum op. 72

1997-2000

25 min

Saint Adalbert Cantata for chorus and ensemble

Text: Liturgical (L)/the composer (P)

chorus(SATB)-perc:3tam-t/2t.bells/2glsp/BD-2pft-organ

9790060113703 **(Vocal Score)**

9790060113581 **(Full score)**

World Premiere: 21 Jun 2000

Garden Church, Hannover, Germany

Chorus and instrumental ensemble from The National Philharmonic, Warsaw

Conductor: Henryk Wojnarowski

The Song of Rodziny Katynskie op. 81

(Piesn Rodzin Katynskich)

2004

5 min

for chorus a cappella

Text: Tadeusz Lutoborski (Polish)

S.A.T.B

World Premiere: 13 Nov 2005

Krakow, Poland

Polish Radio Choir

Three Lullabies op. 49

Drei Wiegenlieder

1984, rev. 1991

10 min 30 sec

for mixed choir

Text: traditional (P)

SATB unaccompanied

9790060096907 **SATB**

World Premiere: 02 Aug 1991

Lerchenborg Festival, Denmark, Denmark

Ars Nova

Conductor: Bo Holten

Totus Tuus op. 60

1987

11 min

for unaccompanied mixed chorus

Text: Maria Boguslawska (L)

chorus a cappella

9790060082320 **SSAA, TTBB**

World Premiere: 19 Jul 1987

Victory Square, Warsaw, Poland

Warsaw Academy of Catholic Theology Choir

Availability: World (excluding Poland, Albania, Bulgaria, China, Yugoslavia, Cuba, North Korea, Vietnam, Rumania, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and former Soviet Union)

Two Little Songs of Tuwim op. 33

1972

4 min 30 sec

for a choir of 4 equal voices

Text: Julian Tuwim (P)

Availability: USA, Canada and Mexico

Two Marian Hymns

1986
